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CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

NEW WAGE INCREASES FOR MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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NEW WAGE INCREASES FOR MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS

In June 1960, in conjunction with the overall reforms taking place in the wage structure of the entire Soviet urban labor force, new regulations were enacted increasing the salaries of 682,000 Ministry of Communications workers. This move probably can be attributed to the increasing importance of securing and retaining skilled labor in the expanding and increasingly complex communications systems of the USSR.

The wage increases for lower-paid communications workers were to become effective beginning in the second quarter of 1960 and increases for higher officials will become effective by September of 1961.

The average wage rate of communications workers already approximates that of the average Soviet worker, and under the new regulations it will increase 27.9 percent in a 15-month period while an increase of only 26 percent is planned for the total Soviet labor force during the entire Seven-Year Plan. This large increase for communications workers in such a short period of time strongly suggests that the Ministry of Communications has been moved into a higher wage-earning bracket than before. The bracketing of the wage-earning powers of Soviet industries is variable, and reflects the priority which the government attaches to individual industries. The movement of a labor group to a higher bracket is intended to insure the industry will have no difficulty obtaining and retaining labor.

Salaries for individual communications workers with the same job positions will be uniform throughout the Soviet Union, except in large communications centers such as Leningrad and Moscow where salaries will be higher. In addition, salary differentials will be continued in hardship areas with rigorous climates in the Arctic, Far East, and Far North.

The new regulations also provide increased incentives for young specialists who heretofore were discouraged from entering the communications field because of longevity bonuses accorded workers with seniority, and because often there were only slight differences in wage rates between positions with wide-range qualification requirements. As a partial solution to this problem, the differential for years of service will be eliminated, although formal training and work experience will be considered in determining salaries under the new framework.^{1/}

Bonus incentives up to 15 percent will be paid to those workers utilizing a foreign language; up to 15 percent for those working under dangerous or hardship conditions; and up to 25 percent for those who overfulfill their quotas. Any sizeable gross increase in the worker's salary, however, may be limited by the qualifications required for a bonus; for instance, improvement in the quality of work, a rise in labor productivity, and a savings in production costs. In addition, any violation, such as absenteeism or violation of safety rules, will cancel out the receipt of a bonus due.^{2/}

The last wage increase for communications workers took place in January 1957, concurrent with wage adjustments which then were being made throughout the Soviet economy. The increase effective beginning the second quarter of 1960 for the communications workers will be adjusted to a minimum of 400-450 rubles a month. The completion of the total Soviet wage adjustment program is not expected to be completed until 1962.

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Table 1

MONTHLY BASE SALARIES FOR MASS TRADE WORKERS^a/
OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
BY CLASS BEGINNING DURING 1960^b/

| Occupation | Category | Monthly Salary (rubles) | |
|--|----------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | Moscow, Leningrad, and Other Large Cities | Remaining Cities and Rural Areas |
| Mailmen | 1 | 650 | 600 |
| | 2 | 600 | 550 |
| | 3 | 550 | 500 |
| Telegraph operators | 1 | 800 | 750 |
| | 2 | 700 | 650 |
| | 3 | 600 | 550 |
| Long-distance telephone operators | 1 | 800 | 750 |
| | 2 | 700 | 650 |
| | 3 | 600 | 550 |
| City and rural telephone operators | 1 | 650 | 600 |
| | 2 | 550 | 500 |
| | 3 | 450 | 450 |
| Sorters of postal matter and printed publications | 1 | 800 | 750 |
| | 2 | 700 | 650 |
| | 3 | 600 | 550 |
| Chiefs of rail- road mail cars | 1 | 950 | 850 |
| | 2 | 900 | 750 |
| | 3 | 800 | 650 |

a. Workers in the mass trades comprise 576,000 of the total 682,000 Ministry of Communications workers. The remaining workers are in executive, administrative and technical positions.

b. Uniform salaries are established for communications workers in the mass trades with subdivision into classes (categories) on the basis of qualifications. Workers of enterprises with a small volume of work and workers engaged in less responsible areas will be found in the lower categories.

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Table 2

MONTHLY BASE SALARIES OF BRANCH COMMUNICATIONS
CHIEFS BY CLASS BEGINNING DURING 1960

| <u>Class of Office a/</u> | <u>Monthly Salary (Rubles)</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 1,100 - 1,300 |
| 2 | 1,000 - 1,100 |
| 3 | 900 - 1,000 |
| 4 | 800 - 900 |
| 5 | 700 - 800 |
| 6 | 600 - 700 |

- a. Branch communications offices of consolidated communications enterprises are classified according to yearly income. Based on 1955 information, those offices with an income of 370,000 rubles or more were in Class 1; from 180,000-369,000 rubles in Class 2; from 90,000-179,000 in Class 3; from 43,000-89,000 in Class 4; from 22,000-42,000 in Class 5; from 12,000-21,000 in Class 6. 3/ No data is available on salaries for chiefs of large communications centers.

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